

Coach House Church BEACONS

GODS PERFECT PEACE

3 R D F E B R U A R Y 2 0 2 1

"Shalom (Peace) I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid." (John 14:27)

Shalom Alechem—Peace to You, Friend,

Shalom! The greeting for hello and goodbye among God's People in Israel and around the world is not riches, success, or even prosperity. It is simply Peace!

And yet we all know that peace is not so simple to obtain. Even those who worship Yeshua (Jesus), the Sar Shalom (Prince of Peace) Himself succumb to stress, anxiety and strife. Why? Perhaps we don't yet have a good grasp of what this peace is that YHVH Shalom, our Father God of Peace wants His children to experience even in the chaos of our fallen world, nor do we know how to obtain it.

Let's begin that understanding here.

What Is Shalom?

In the ancient language of our God of Peace (Hebrew), Shalom is so much more than quietness, harmony, and tranquillity as we think of peace today.

Shalom comes from the word shalem, which means whole or complete as in a debt that has been paid in full or in the blessing for a complete healing, refu'ah shleimah. And where else would we expect to find shalem on earth than in the City of God itself — Yeru-shalayim (Yeru-shalem). But Jerusalem is certainly not a beacon of shalem (peace) today.

In the Book of Revelation, we discover there will be a New Jerusalem, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

Here, God will dwell with us and be our light. He will wipe every tear from our eyes. "Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more." (Revelation 21:2-5)

It will exude with God's perfect peace. In fact, perfection (shleimut in Hebrew) is another word related to shalom. Until the New Jerusalem comes and we live in perfect harmony with our Creator, what part of His shalom can we really expect to experience in our daily lives? Sadly, Christians and Messianic Jews are turning to the "things of the world" to find peace. Yet, breathing exercises, creative imagery, and medication just aren't working for the vast majority of us Believers who are seeking shalom.

And without peace, even our money, success, and health cannot be fully enjoyed. Why not? Because we are seeking the kind of peace the world offers instead of the kind God offers us in His kingdom.

"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Romans 14:17)

This could be why our efforts so often lead us into worry and fear instead of joy and peace that God desires for us. Which Way Do You Want to Go? It's quite difficult to hear God or rest in His Presence when we are preoccupied with worry and fear. Yeshua addressed this when he said,

"Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?" (Matthew 6:27)

How, then, do we grasp a piece of God's perfect peace when all of today's solutions fail us? As usual, God's Word has the answer:

"You will keep in perfect peace [shalom shalom] those whose minds are steadfast because they trust in You." (Isaiah 26:3)

We can trust God because He is our reliable, unchanging, steadfast rock. What He says He will do — He does. He is the only one who can give us double shalom, perfect peace — not the temporary and unsatisfying peace that the world gives, but the peace that only Heaven can impart. David describes this perfect peace in a picturesque and relaxing scene that any spa-enthusiast would appreciate:

"The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside quiet waters. He refreshes my soul ... Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for You are with me." (Psalm 23:1-4)

What is the secret to David's peace? He knows that his Divine Shepherd is with him doing what shepherds do: guiding, protecting, and providing. Moreover, David obediently follows his shepherd. He writes,

"Great peace have those who love your Torah [law, instruction], and nothing can make them stumble." (Psalm 119:165)

It is a Jewish belief that "all that is written in the Torah was written for the sake of peace." (Midrash Tanh. Shoftim 19) And we see God promise peace time after time in Scripture for those who love and obey His Torah.

As one example, God made a whole covenant of shalom — an earthly priesthood — with Aaron's descendants. He did this because Aaron's grandson Phinehas demonstrated a righteous jealousy for God's Word (Numbers 25:6–18). There are many ways we can protect God's Word today, beginning with bringing our homes under the authority of God, teaching our children to delight in His Word, being an example of righteous living, and not allowing evil influences to invade our hearts and minds.

We can also protect God's Word in our communities by supporting those who are fighting the battle for righteousness in our fallen world. They need our prayers of protection and our actions to keep them in positions of authority. And we can use our positions of influence in the world to affect change, even in an ungodly environment. No matter how small we think our influence may be, the effects could potentially be massive.

Over time, Israel stopped doing God's work and started following the ungodly practices of their neighbours, so He told them quite frankly why they were being exiled to Babylon, "If only you had paid attention to My commands, your peace would have been like a river, your shalom like the waves of the sea." (Isaiah 48:8)

But of course, achieving peace through obedience has its challenges. Wearing the mantle of authority over Israel, King David was no stranger to stressful issues. He had a family with its share of royal dilemmas, the worries of government, the conundrums of war, and many enemies, yet these things did not overcome him. Instead, David enjoyed shalom through his love of God's Word and the assurance that his God was with him through all of it.

Let's see how this worked out in his daily life.

Repentance (Teshuvah in Hebrew) is a turning away from sin and turning back toward living according to God's Word.

Sincere Repentance Brings Peace

As the leader of a mighty army, David asked God how to defeat the Philistines. He waited for God's reply, obeyed His instructions, and won a mighty victory (1 Chronicles 14:14–17).

However, after David realized his personal sins of adultery with Bathsheba and arranging the murder of her husband, he certainly did not experience perfect peace.

David suffered the loss of his first new-born son and continual strife in his family as a result of his sin. And how did he react to God's discipline? He humbly accepted the consequences and turned back to loving and following his Shepherd. And he earnestly prayed:

"Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence ... Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit." (Psalm 51:4-12)

No matter how small or great our sins have been, may David's prayer be our prayer, too. As a consequence of his sincere repentance, God allowed David to remain the anointed king of Israel; he demonstrated a sincere trust in his Shepherd alone to sustain him, bless him, and provide for him (Isaiah 26:3).

On the other hand, the Prophet Ezekiel warned Israel what would happen to them if they showed no repentance:

"I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord YHVH. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin." (Ezekiel 18:30)

It is sincere repentance that God desires so that we will experience peace with Him, and that is why Yeshua (Jesus) preached this throughout Israel:

"The kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." (Mark 1:15)

Yeshua, Our Prince of Peace We need to set our mind on obtaining God's perfect, true peace and not the world's fake peace.

God sent His only begotten Son into this fallen world so we could see what living in His perfect peace really looks like. It is a life of obedience, crowned with eternal life for all those who follow Him. How is this so?

After doing only what the Father wanted done (John 4:34, 5:19), Yeshua paid in full the death penalty that we were supposed to pay for disobeying God's Law.

Even though there are earthly consequences to our disobedience, we can trust that the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Yeshua, paid the eternal consequences of our sin, which is death. It is only because of Him that we can be brought

back into the family of our heavenly Father where a home is even now being prepared for us forever:

"So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Messiah Yeshua. And because you belong to Him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do.

"He sent His own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving His Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit...

"Letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace." (Romans 8:1-6)

The consequence of obeying God is peace through any storm that comes our way. Peace through upheaval and bad news. Peace through the flood, the earthquakes of life. Peace that passes all understanding because our sight or vision is fixed on the author and creator of life.

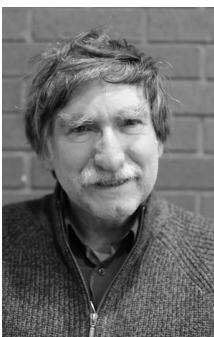
And the consequence of Believing in Yeshua as Messiah is a peace in knowing that our Father in Heaven loves us so much "that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life." (John 3:16)

When Yeshua rose from the grave, the first words He said to His discouraged disciples were simply: Shalom Alechem; Peace to you (Luke 24:36).

He could have wished for them anything, but He wished for them everything with those words of Peace, and He wishes those same words to us today.

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord, Messiah Yeshua, who gave Himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen." (Galatians 1:3-5)

(I acknowledge the source of this article as Messianic Bibles for Israel.)



STEVE WENT



Coach House Church

leadership@coachhousechurch.org // 0161 432 5604

the coach house church, 222 wellington road north, stockport sk4 2qn